

23. Dallas Stars

Prospect System Ranking – 23rd (Last Year - 17th)

GM: Jim Nill Hired: April 2013

COACH: Peter DeBoer Hired: June 2022

You won't catch them complaining, but the Dallas Stars' prospect pool has slid from 17th to 23rd, a steep drop from their top-10 ranking two years ago. The culprit? Graduations of Thomas Harley, Mavrik Bourque, and Wyatt Johnston, combined with trading Logan Stankoven, have drained the system. To be considered a Stanley Cup contender, it's a price GM Jim Nill willingly pays to chase a championship.

At the trade deadline, Nill flexed his muscles, going all-in and acquiring Mikko Rantanen and Mikael Granlund while parting with Stankoven, first-round picks in 2025, 2026, and 2028, and a plethora of additional draft capital. After missing only one first-round pick in his decade-long tenure, it's a strong signal that the time to push things over the edge is now.

With so many graduates, Lian Bischel now carries the load as the club's top-ranked prospect. And with 38 NHL games on his ledger, even he is set to take that next leap.

At the American League level, Matej Blumel and Justin Hryckowian showed significant promise as the Texas Stars' one-two punch, posting 71 and 60 points, respectively. Joining that duo at the end of the season was Ayrton Martino, who had come off a tremendous Senior year in Clarkson with a career high 51 points in 39 games – sixth in the nation.

Meanwhile, Emil Hemming, their highest-ranked forward and most recent first-round talent (29th overall, 2024), crossed the pond for his OHL rookie season. He's in the midst of a Memorial Cup push, having posted 48 points in 60 games.

It's all business in Dallas at the moment, so any prospect and pick has to be considered a high risk of moving as the Stars look to bolster things for a longstanding playoff window.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
1	Lian Bichsel	Dal	D	20	6-6/233
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 22(18th)	Dal	2022	18	18-May-04	Switzerland
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Dallas (NHL)	38	4	5	9	41

Lian Bichsel started the year in the AHL before earning a full-time role on the Dallas Stars' blueline. While his production has remained in line with expectations, he's shown noticeable improvement in his decision-making with the puck. It may not be perfect yet, but Bichsel has earned the trust of head coach Pete DeBoer and is on track to play in nearly half the Stars' games this season. Bichsel's biggest strength is undoubtedly his physicality. He's an absolute monster and isn't afraid to use his size, as seen after his call-up to the NHL in January. Despite being a bigger player, he also possesses solid skating and mobility. One area to watch for improvement is Bichsel's tendency to chase hits, which can pull him out of position. Bichsel is exactly the type of player you want in a second-pairing role, where he can set the tone physically and disrupt the flow of opposing skill players.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
2	Emil Hemming	Dal	RW	18	6-1/205
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 24(29th)	Dal	2024	29	27-Jun-06	Finland
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Barrie (OHL)	60	18	30	48	20

Expectations were pretty high for Hemming coming into this year after he signed with Barrie of the OHL, however, he did not meet them in what was a pretty unremarkable offensive season. Granted, the Colts did not have a single player hit the 60-point plateau, operating a well-balanced lineup. Hemming's season resembled that of Seattle first rounder Eduard Sale in his lone OHL year in that there were some difficulties adjusting to the smaller ice and North American game. It's clear that Hemming has terrific offensive upside due to his puck skill and heavy shot. However, his engagement off the puck leaves you wanting more; there's a need to use his size and skating combination more consistently to earn touches, especially through the middle of the ice. The flashes of strong play give hope that he can figure things out and where he plays next year remains a mystery. Like Sale, could he play in the AHL as a 19-year-old so that Dallas could take a more hands on approach with their former first rounder?

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
3	Matej Blumel	Dal	LW	24	6-0/200
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
FA(6/22)	Edm	2019	100	31-May-00	Czech
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Texas (AHL)	67	39	33	72	26

Matej Blumel's third season in Texas was another reminder of what we've seen all along: he can flat-out score goals. Averaging over 0.6 goals per game, he's proven time and time again that his shot is dangerous. He's got a knack for finding those open spots, and when the puck's on his stick, that quick release doesn't give goalies much of a chance. Anywhere on the ice, he's a threat, especially with his signature one-timer. The knock, though, is that he's still not quite the playmaker you'd want him to be at the NHL level. His puck-carrying game isn't there yet, which means he might be best utilized in a more sheltered, sniper role. And with Dallas' depth up front, it'll be tough for him to secure a long-term spot in the NHL.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
4	Ayrton Martino	Dal	LW	22	5-11/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
`21(73rd)	Dal	2021	73	28-Sep-02	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Clarkson (ECAC)	39	25	26	51	8

It took four years, but Martino finally popped off in his senior year at Clarkson, emerging as one of the top offensive players at the collegiate level. Coming into the year, Martino was probably a bubble player to be signed by the Stars, however he really forced their hand with his progression this year and subsequently earned his ELC. Martino is best described as a slippery offensive player. He's not the biggest. He's not the strongest. However, his edgework and agility are a strong suit; he routinely escapes pressure thanks to his quick feet. He's also got great vision with the puck; he excels as a playmaker both in transition and coming off the wall. The adjustment to the pro level could be a difficult one for him. He will likely need a few years at the AHL level to build strength and adapt his game to the pro level. He's very much a classic "boom or bust" prospect. In that sense, he's going to be a top six player for the Stars or a classic tweener.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
5	Justin Hryckowian	Dal	C	24	5-10/195
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
FA(3/24)				23-Feb-01	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Texas (AHL)	67	22	38	60	27

Justin Hryckowian was picked up by the Stars last year after impressing at a tryout following the conclusion of his final NCAA season. This year, he made a strong entrance into his first full pro season, maintaining just under a point-per-game pace and even getting a brief stint in the NHL. Though Hryckowian is on the shorter side, he has a stocky build and likes to set up shop beside the net, where he can make quick return feeds to his linemates. Offensively, he benefits from playing alongside Blumel, a proven goal scorer, but where Hryckowian truly stands out is defensively. He consistently gives his best effort battling for pucks on the forecheck and in his own zone. Given his well-rounded skill set, I could see him becoming a valuable rotational depth piece for the Stars in two or three years.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
6	Aram Minnetian	Dal	D	20	5-11/190
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(125th)	Dal	2023	125	19-Mar-05	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Boston College (HE)	35	2	13	15	16

A mobile two-way defender, Minnetian just finished his sophomore season at Boston College, where he established himself as a key member of the program. He also captured a gold medal at the World Juniors Championships with the United States, playing a support role. While his offensive production hasn't been significant at the collegiate level, Minnetian is a reliable defensive player because of his ability to initiate the breakout and defend in transition. As an average sized, jack of all trades type, the question is, what kind of role would Minnetian fill at the NHL level? Could his defensive game be as successful at the pro level given his average size? He'll return to BC as a junior and the hope is that he can take over the team's powerplay unit and gain more confidence in his ability to be a difference maker with the puck. It will likely be the key to unlocking his potential to become a solid #4-6 defender for the Stars in the future.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
7	Christian Kyrrou	Dal	D	21	5-10/170
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 22(50th)	Dal	2022	50	16-Sep-03	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Texas (AHL)	36	4	11	15	2

Kyrrou's second AHL season yielded similar offensive output to his first, as the dynamic offensive defenseman once again showed his ability to create big plays with his feet, shifty body fakes, and deadly accurate shot. However, Kyrrou still struggled with physicality, weighing in at under 170 pounds and rarely using his body to make plays. He's an interesting player archetype; he isn't the biggest or strongest and wants to play an offensive game but isn't yet refined enough to crack an NHL top four role. There's obvious potential, and with Dallas currently lacking right-handed defensemen, Kyrrou could eventually earn a role once he bulks up and continues to refine his game.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
8	Antonio Stranges	Dal	LW	23	5-11/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 20(123rd)	Dal	2020	123	5-Feb-02	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Texas (AHL)	55	18	25	43	30

Stranges concludes his third full season in the pros still showcasing what we've come to expect: impressive edgework, good pace, and dynamic stickhandling. At this stage in his development, it's starting to look like he's fallen behind some of the Stars' other undersized forwards and may only get occasional call-ups when injuries hit. That said, don't count Stranges out just yet. His recent jump in production reflects his ability to adapt to a faster, stronger league, and if he gets a call-up, we could see him racking up points alongside another young talent like Mavrik Bourque and potentially earning a full-time roster spot.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
9	Arttu Hyry	Dal	RW	24	6-2/210
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
FA(4/24)				6-Apr-01	Finland
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Texas (AHL)	67	24	25	49	12

Hyry arrived from Karpat for his first season in North America, spending the majority of the year in the AHL with a short stint in the NHL. Unlike most prospects who take time to find their footing, Hyry jumped right in, scoring five points in his first six games. His upside projects him as a bottom six forward who can step into the lineup when needed. Arttu scores most of his goals by getting into dirty areas and finishing off rebounds or quick tap-ins. His shot isn't the hardest, but it has a deceptive release and quick elevation, making him a threat in front of the net. Hyry's puck-carrying game mostly involves slipping down the boards and driving deep into the zone to center the puck. As for carving out an NHL spot, he seems like a potential fourth liner for the Stars if head coach DeBoer wants to move forward with him.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
10	Tristan Bertucci	Dal	D	19	6-1/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 23(61st)	Dal	2023	61	12-Jul-05	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Barrie (OHL)	52	7	30	37	47

Dallas fans might be concerned about the fact that Bertucci's offensive production declined in both years post draft, however, it's important to note that the downswing in production came as a result of Bertucci remodelling his game. This year in Barrie, he really focused on improving his defensive play to become one of the more effective transitional defenders in the OHL. Think of the way John Marino plays. Bertucci activated less, focusing more on clean exit passes and it's clear that Dallas (and Barrie) had asked him to become a little more "safe." While he's not likely to quarterback a powerplay at the next level, there's still offensive upside to Bertucci's game thanks to a smooth stride and the ability to escape pressure. He projects as a #4-6 defender who could provide reliable depth to Dallas in the future, although he's going to need time in the AHL to build confidence.

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
11	Remi Poirier	Dal	G	23	6-2/215
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 20(185th)	Dal	2020	185	6-Oct-01	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Texas (AHL)	31	17	11	2.50	0.908

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
12	George Fegaras	Dal	D	21	6-1/188
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 22(83rd)	Dal	2022	83	26-Apr-04	USA
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Cornell (ECAC)	30	1	13	14	10

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
13	Chase Wheatcroft	Dal	C	22	6-2/190
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
FA(3/23)				28-May-02	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Texas (AHL)	67	10	17	27	26

RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
14	Justin Ertel	Dal	LW	21	6-2/185
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
` 21(79th)	Dal	2021	79	27-May-03	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Texas (AHL)	25	2	7	9	18

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RNK	PLAYER	NHL	POS	AGE	HT/WT
15	Angus MacDonell	Dal	C	19	5-9/180
ACQUIRED	DFT TM	DFT YR	DFT SELECTED	BIRTHDATE	NATIONALITY
`23(189th)	Dal	2023	189	11-May-05	Canada
TM	GP	G(W)	A(L)	PTS(GAA)	PIM(SPCT)
Brampton (OHL)	46	27	27	54	76